

*A guide to documenting
and preserving your family's
most important memories*

on

legacy

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BY LAURA RICHARDS PHOTOGRAPHY

why



I believe in the idea of legacy. More specifically, the idea of photos as legacy. They're one of the most important things we can leave our children.

Our photographs tell future generations,

“The life and love we created mattered.”

documenting



7 TIPS ON TAKING BETTER PHOTOS AT HOME

1 Seek emotion

This one is first for a reason. Real, raw emotion is the secret ingredient to great home photography. Home is where we're most vulnerable, so try to capture a range of emotion. Sadness and pain are just as important to your story as joy and excitement.

Squat, crawl, climb 2

Experiencing your day from different angles will result in more interesting photos.

This is especially important when photographing children and pets.

Get on their level — or way above it.

3 *Let it happen*

Think of photography as moment-freezing, not moment-creating. Home photography should document life exactly how it is. Don't force smiles or poses. Our photos speak loudest when we observe quietly.



4

Embrace The small

I say this often, but it's so important to the photos I create: The big moments are the small ones. Every day spent with family and friends is a reason to pull out your camera. The more photos you take, the more you'll realize just how many tiny, beautiful moments we let quietly slip by.

5 *Get closer*

One of the most important things I've learned about photography is that there's always room to move closer to your subjects. This intimacy offers such a different and often emotion-filled perspective.

6 *Pass The camera*

Seven years ago, I sat on the floor of our living room surrounded by boxes of old photos. I was looking for all the photos of me and my dad, who'd died just days earlier. There were several, but not enough for me. It wasn't until after he was gone that I realized he was behind the camera most of the time. So please don't forget to stop and say, "Here, you take some."

Print 7

Better photos are tangible photos. Promise yourself you'll always have more pictures made from ink and paper than pixels. Promise your family they'll always have albums to hold in their hands and look at on rainy days — or when they long for days gone.

Try to print photos at least once a month, so you don't get overwhelmed.





*Our photos speak
loudest when we
observe quietly.*

preserving



5 TIPS ON KEEPING YOUR PHOTOS BEAUTIFUL

- 1 Before handling photos, especially very old ones, make sure your hands and work surface are clean. Keep food and drinks away.
- 2 Never write on your photos (even on the back) or use tape or glue on them.
- 3 Never store photos in your attic or basement, as these are prone to leaks, temperature changes and toppling boxes. Instead, keep them in a dry, cool, stable environment away from direct light.
- 4 The best place for your photos is in a high-quality album. Choose one with note space beside each photo to document names, date and a little description of what's going on in the photo (this will be so meaningful to future generations).
- 5 Keep digital files of very special photos in multiple places, like an external hard drive or Cloud-based platform.

AN EASY METHOD FOR DIGITIZING OLD PHOTOS

- 1 To digitize my grandmother's photographs, I took pictures of them, rather than scan them. This gave me very large, high-resolution files to work with. (Most phone cameras also do a good job).
- 2 For best results, find a well-lit space. I took them in my mom's dining room, which has lots of soft, natural light from a large window. Now, angle your camera directly above the photo and start snapping. If you notice your shadow or reflection in the photo, shift your position or change locations.
- 3 Upload the photos to your computer. You can use basic editing software to crop and straighten your images. If you have a program like Photoshop, you can remove scratches, creases and stains. I also like to drop the highlights a bit to bring out more detail.
- 4 Now that your photos are digital, you can easily share them with family members via Dropbox, email or flash drives.

